

## **INDEPENDENT EVALUATION AND BOARD OVERSIGHT ARE CRITICAL TO VERMONT'S TOBACCO CONTROL PROGRAM SUCCESS**

The Vermont Tobacco Evaluation and Review Board (VTERB) is an independent board, established in 2001, consisting of members of the public and private sectors, as well as state agency representation. Its independent authority ensures that:

- ✓ program investments are appropriately monitored and evaluated
- ✓ investment decisions are made based upon independent program evaluation to ensure successful outcomes
- ✓ partnerships among funded state agencies are maintained
- ✓ state expenditures are leveraged to the greatest extent possible

The independence of VTERB ensures that critical stakeholders and an engaged public body have a voice in the development and maintenance of the statewide tobacco control program.

### **The Evidence is clear.**

Because of VTERB oversight and independent evaluation, media campaigns are stronger, funding decisions are more prudent and better leveraged, agency partnerships have led to improvements in reaching target audiences, program strategies are consistently reviewed and improved, and the overall tobacco use rate among Vermonters has steadily declined. 2015 evaluation example: RTI International (the independent evaluator) will provide Vermont a 12-year retrospective progress report and recommendations to help Vermont meet its 2020 tobacco control goals.

Without VTERB oversight and without independent evaluation, agencies are not held rigorously accountable for the ways in which their state allocation of Master Settlement Agreement dollars are spent and there is no authority to ensure fiscal responsibility or program effectiveness.

**An independent Board and independent evaluation of the Vermont Tobacco Control Program must remain the standard.**

## **WHY INDEPENDENT EVALUATION**

Effective program evaluation is a systematic way to improve and account for public health actions.

Health improvement is what the Vermont Tobacco Control Program strives to achieve. To reach this goal, Vermont must devote funding and leverage resources to evaluating the effects of programmatic actions.

Independent evaluations are the most rigorous means of measuring impact and are at the heart of accountability, learning, transparency, and evidence-based decision making.